

# **Economic Growth Region 3**

## **Request for Proposals**

**For**

**Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Title I Youth  
Programs and Services**

**Services to be Delivered**

**July 1, 2008 – June 30, 2010**

**RFP Issue Date: May 5, 2008**

**Proposal Due Date: June 9, 2008**

*Serving the following Indiana counties: Adams, Allen, DeKalb, Grant, Huntington,  
LaGrange, Noble, Steuben, Wabash, Wells and Whitley.*

**WorkOne Northeast**

300 E. Main Street, Suite 100  
Fort Wayne, IN 46802  
260-459-1400

## **Section I: Background and General RFP Information**

### **A. Overview of RFP**

The Regional Operator (RO) for Economic Growth Region 3 (EGR-3) is issuing this Request for Proposals (RFP) to procure service providers to deliver WIA Title I Youth services to eligible youth in Northeast Indiana. More specifically, the RO is seeking proposals from organizations and agencies to use WIA Youth funds to provide workforce development and preparation services to youth between the ages of 14-21 who meet federal eligibility criteria.

In keeping with the intent of WIA, the RO is committed to helping economically disadvantaged youth to achieve in school, access job training and higher education opportunities, and gain the knowledge and skills required to progress in well-paying careers. The RO seeks partnerships with organizations that can demonstrate measurable, positive impact on youth. Youth-serving organizations are invited to respond to this Request for Proposal (RFP) as an important step toward building a network of integrated youth services, one that helps youth succeed in school, at work, and as members and leaders of their communities.

### **B. Purpose of RFP**

The purpose of this RFP is to solicit proposals for the delivery of youth services under the Workforce Investment Act in the following counties: Adams, Allen, DeKalb, Grant, Huntington, LaGrange, Noble, Steuben, Wabash, Wells, and Whitley. Interested organizations can propose programs and services for youth in all eleven counties or they can propose to target specific counties as appropriate. However, the RO will actively work to ensure that WIA Youth services are available to eligible youth in every county. As such, interested organizations are encouraged to make proposed youth programs and services available in the more rural counties of EGR-3.

WIA rules require that programs must be designed to serve both low income in-school and out-of-school youth. In this solicitation, **the RO is only accepting proposals that target and serve one or more of the three following categories of youth**

- Youth who are 16 years of age or older and have dropped out of school (and have not yet earned a GED);
- Youth who are 16 years of age or older, are in school, but are at-risk of not successfully finishing high school; and,
- Youth who have successfully completed high school, desire to participate in further educational activities, but lack the financial resources to attend this higher level training.

### **C. WIA Youth Program Description**

The overall goal of the WIA Youth program is to connect eligible youth to skill development and other educational activities and then to the local labor market. To accomplish this, strategies must be developed to help interested youth enroll in and successfully complete critical skill development activities AND successfully transition to employment in the local labor market. Youth who are deficient in basic skills must also participate in activities designed to improve their reading, writing, math, analytical, computer and communication skills. From a broad perspective, the WIA youth program design must consist of four components: 1) an objective assessment of the skill levels and service needs of youth customers, 2) the development of an

individual service strategy for each youth customer, 3) the delivery of specific skill development and other workforce services to youth customers, and 4) all youth must receive some form of follow-up services for a minimum period of 12 months following their completion of all program activities. From a more detailed perspective, the WIA legislation mandates that ten specific program elements must be included in the WIA Youth program design (these can be available by direct service provision, through partnerships with other organizations, or by referral to other organizations as appropriate):

- Tutoring and instruction leading to secondary school completion, including dropout prevention activities
- Alternative secondary school offerings
- Summer employment opportunities, directly linked to academic and occupational learning activities
- Paid or unpaid work experiences, including internships
- Occupational skill training
- Leadership development opportunities
- Supportive services
- Comprehensive guidance and counseling
- Adult Mentoring
- Follow up services for a minimum of 12 months

Interested organizations should also note that the RO views strong community partnerships as instrumental to the success and sustainability of “second chance” programs for at-risk and out-of-school youth. Proposals should therefore demonstrate comprehensive collaboration - including shared financing as appropriate – among local school districts, community colleges, and community-based organizations.

#### **D. Alignment of WIA Youth Program with High-Growth Industries**

The RO is committed to supporting efforts by the Northeast Indiana Regional Partnership to align workforce development and economic development activities in the region. Over the past year, there have been significant efforts to identify target industries that will be the focus of these joint workforce/economic development activities. These regional efforts have identified six high-growth industries that are to be targeted: (1) Advanced Materials, (2) Defense, (3) Transportation & Logistics, (4) Orthopedic Devices, (5) Food Processing, and (6) Financial Services. The RO is seeking WIA Youth proposals from organizations that understand the relationship between workforce and economic development and that can assist in aligning WIA Youth programs and services with these targeted industries.

#### **E. Transition of Current (Carry-In) WIA Youth Customers**

The RO is committed to a smooth continuation of services to existing youth customers without an undue interruption of services. Youth customers currently receiving services from an existing provider will continue to receive services from that provider if the provider is awarded a new contract through this RFP. Youth customers currently receiving services from an existing provider that does not receive a contract extension or new contract under this RFP will be smoothly transitioned to another provider. The RO may require new contractors to accept “carry-in” WIA youth participants and to continue providing appropriate WIA services to these young individuals.

## **F. Performance Measures**

The Workforce Investment Act measures the success of WIA Youth programs services based on a set of required performance measures. These performance standards have recently undergone a significant change and now include three Department of Labor (DOL) defined measures for youth served in the program as follows:

- |  |                  |
|--|------------------|
| ▪ Placement in Employment or Education | 66% of all youth |
| ▪ Attainment of Degree or Certificate  | 50% of all youth |
| ▪ Literacy and Numeracy Gains          | 75% of all youth |

Please note that these performance measures are negotiated on an annual basis and are therefore subject to change based on these negotiations with the Indiana Department of Workforce Development and DOL. For more specific information on these measures, interested organizations are encouraged to review Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 17-05 as issued by the US Department of Labor on February 17, 2006. This Guidance Letter provides significant detail on how these performance measures are calculated.

## **G. Eligible Bidders**

Organizations eligible to submit proposals in response to this RFP include not-for-profit organizations, education institutions, government entities, for-profit businesses and other organizations that are not suspended, debarred or otherwise prohibited from entering into a legal contract for WIA Youth funding. Proposals from community-based organizations, faith-based organizations, small businesses and minority-owned businesses are encouraged. Organizations, however, must have at least one year experience in serving the targeted youth population in a structured environment.

All bidders must accept liability for all aspects of any WIA program conducted under contract with the RO. Bidders will be liable for any disallowed costs or legal expenditures of funds or program operations conducted.

This Request for Proposals is not in itself an offer of work nor does it commit the RO to fund any proposals submitted. The RO is not liable for any costs incurred in the preparation or research of proposals. The RO reserves the right to make an award to any bidder or to make no awards, if that is deemed to serve the best interests of EGR-3. All commitments made by the RO are contingent upon the availability of funds.

## **H. Program and Contract Length**

The RO intends to be as inclusive as possible in this solicitation. The goal is to receive a wide variety of high quality, innovative proposals that meet the workforce development needs of the emerging workforce in EGR-3. The resulting contract(s) with the successful bidder(s) will be for a two-year period, July 1, 2008 to June 30, 2010. The second year of this initial two year contract will be based on the successful bidder's performance in the first year. Based on contract performance and at the discretion of the RO, this contract may also be renewed for a third year, July 1, 2010 to June 30, 2011. The form of the contract will be cost-reimbursement.

## **I. RFP Provisions and Expectations**

The RO assures that it will comply fully with the nondiscrimination and equal opportunity provisions of the following laws: Section 188 of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998; Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended; The Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended; and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended. The RO also assures that it will comply with 29 CFR Part 37 and all other regulations implementing the laws listed above. This assurance applies to the WIA Title I financially assisted program or activity, and to all agreements that the RO makes to carry out the WIA Title I financially assisted program or activity. This WIA Title I funded program is an equal opportunity employer/program. Auxiliary aids and services will be made available upon request for individuals with disabilities. By submitting a bid all bidders are providing an assurance that they will comply with the above nondiscrimination and equal opportunity provisions.

The successful bidder also assures that if awarded a contract by the RO, it will comply with Regional, State and Federal program and financial monitoring requirements. This means the bidder will make available required information (both program and financial) as is required to satisfy local, state, and federal monitoring expectations. In addition, bidders are required to maintain all WIA records for three years.

Bidding organizations should note that specifications in this RFP may change based on issuance of State or Federal policy or WIA re-authorization. The RO will work with successful bidders to implement any changes required by the State or the federal Department of Labor. By submitting a proposal, the bidder agrees to work cooperatively with the RO to comply with any required subsequent changes.

## **J. Proposal Submission and Time Line**

Responses to this RFP must be submitted by 4:00 p.m. EST on June 9, 2008. Proposals received after this deadline may not be considered for funding. To ensure a fair and open process for all interested bidders, the following time table will be used with this RFP:

RFP Issued	May 5, 2008
Proposals Due	June 9, 2008
Proposal Review Completed	June 13, 2008
Contract Negotiations Completed	June 27, 2008
Contractor Begins Delivering Services	July 1, 2008 or after

The RO may require selected bidders to attend oral interviews, participate in negotiations and rewrite their statements of work as agreed upon during the negotiations.

## **K. RFP Inquiries**

Questions regarding this RFP may be submitted in writing to Beth Suman, CFO and COO, via email to [BSuman@workoneNE.org](mailto:BSuman@workoneNE.org) or fax at 260-436-5973.

## Section II: Proposal Requirements for EGR-3 Youth Proposals

- A. Proposals must be received by 4:00 p.m. EST, June 9, 2008 in person or by mail at the address indicated. Proposals received after that time and date may be rejected. Please note that proposals must be received not postmarked by June 9, 2008. Proposals will not be accepted by email or fax.
- B. Proposals must include:
- Forms completed with all information requested and executed properly.
  - All proposals must be submitted in three ring binders or bound.
  - One copy of the proposal clearly labeled "ORIGINAL."
  - Five copies of the proposal clearly labeled "COPY."
  - All pages must be numbered.
  - Proposal is limited to 30 pages, single-sided, single-spaced, with one inch margins and a 12 point font.
  - For ease in translating the successful proposal into a contractual statement of work, all proposals are to be written in the indicative ("will, shall") rather than the subjective ("may, could") case.
  - Proposals that fail to follow instructions and do not include all applicable information and forms may not be considered. Substitutions of forms are not acceptable.
- C. Attachment A, the proposal cover page, should be completed and used as the cover page for the proposal.
- D. Attachment B Budget form needs to be completed with a one page budget narrative.
- E. Attachment C Production Schedule needs to be completed.
- F. Attachment D Non-Collusion Affidavit needs to be signed and submitted.
- G. Attachment E Assurances and Certifications needs to be signed and submitted.
- H. Proposals submitted via mail must be sent with a "Return Receipt Requested." Faxed or electronically transmitted proposals will not be accepted. The transmitting envelope will be clearly marked "proposal" and addressed to:
- Beth Suman, Regional Operator  
Partners for Workforce Solutions  
300 E. Main Street, Suite 100  
Fort Wayne, IN 46802
- I. Assemble your proposal using the following order. Use this as a checklist to ensure the proper order. Failure to follow RFP instructions could result in rejection of your proposal.
- ☐ Cover Page (Attachment A)
  - ☐ Proposal Statement of Work
  - ☐ Attachment B (Budget Plan)
  - ☐ Budget Narrative (one page)

- ❑ Attachment C (Production Schedule)
- ❑ Attachment D (Non-Collusion Affidavit)
- ❑ Attachment E (Assurances and Certifications)
- ❑ Letter(s) of Agreement with partners
- ❑ Copy of most recent audit report

J. Bidders have the right to appeal any action or decision related to this RFP. Appeals will be reviewed and investigated by the RO. The decision of the RO in such situations shall be final. Bidders wishing to make a formal appeal should do so in writing to:

Beth Suman, Regional Operator  
Partners for Workforce Solutions  
300 E. Main Street, Suite 100  
Fort Wayne, IN 46802

### **Section III: Proposal Statement of Work**

#### **A. Organization Background, Qualifications, Performance History Proposal Evaluation 25%**

1. What is the legal status of your organization? Describe your organization, its governance structure, length of existence, vision, mission, and goals. How does proposed WIA Youth program support your organization's mission and goals.
2. Proposals must include information to demonstrate that the provider has a record of success in operating similar youth-oriented workforce programs or projects. Describe your organization's experience providing workforce development and preparation services to youth. Please outline any specific workforce services that your organization has provided to low income youth that are either at-risk of not graduating high school or are out-of-school but looking for further training opportunities. Provide brief descriptions of youth programs your organization operates and provide details on how successful these programs have been.
3. Provide three references of individuals outside of your organization familiar with the quality of prior youth programs your organization has operated.
4. If your organization has not provided prior Workforce Investment Act youth services, please describe other youth services that your organization has provided in the past. Include information about the results of these programs as well.
5. Describe your organization's experience in working with customer tracking and/or MIS systems. Specifically, detail any experience your organization and key staff possess in the real time reporting of customer activities in an MIS data base.

#### **B. Proposed Plan of Work Proposal Evaluation 25%**

1. On page 2 of this RFP, the three specific types of youth that are to be targeted for WIA Youth services are detailed. Within this context, please provide details on which of these specific youth that your organization will target for services. Also, please identify the specific number of youth (for each of the three targeted groups your organization is proposing to serve) that will receive WIA Youth services per year through your organization. Describe your organization's ability to meet the needs of the target groups you are proposing to serve.
2. Describe the specific strategies that your organization will utilize to make youth aware of WIA Youth services and to recruit them for participation in skill development activities. The RO is looking for innovative and nontraditional recruitment strategies that effectively reach out to at-risk youth. Because recruitment is such a critical component of program success, please detail who in your organization will be responsible for planning and implementing your organization's approach to recruitment.
3. Describe the eligibility, objective assessment, individual service strategy development, and case management services that will be provided to youth. Indicate how youth will



be assessed and prepared for skill development opportunities. Describe any innovative or unique approaches to youth assessment that your organization will utilize.

4. Describe all WIA Youth services that will be provided by your organization. Please provide specific details on how each of the ten required WIA Youth services will be delivered to youth that need these services (the ten required services are identified on page 3). Remember, all ten of these services must be available to all eligible youth either directly through your organization or through a partnership/referral relationship with other organizations. The RO is especially interested in the skill development services that your organization will make available to WIA Youth customers. Please provide very detailed information on all skill development services to be provided.
5. Of critical importance, please detail how your proposed WIA Youth services align with the regional labor market. Provide specific details on how your proposed WIA services (including your proposed skill development services) align with the skill requirements of the six industries targeted by the Northeast Indiana Regional Partnership.
6. Describe how your organization will manage WIA Youth services and activities to meet or exceed each of the performance measures that are in place for the WIA Youth program. Provide specific information on the strategies your organization will use ensure that youth are continuously engaged in WIA Youth services until they are successful. In addition, please provide an assurance that services will also be designed to meet any additional quality standards established by the RWB & RO.
7. Describe how funds will be managed to ensure that targeted expenditure levels are met but not exceeded, and to ensure that these services remain available to youth throughout the program year.
8. Describe the process that will be used for approval and payment of direct client expenditures, including an estimated length of time from the case manager decision to provide the financial assistance until the resulting invoice has been paid. Also, describe procedures for making expedient "emergency" payments (i.e. immediate payments needed to reconnect or avoid disconnect of utilities, prevent eviction, etc.).

### **C. Staffing Plan and Organizational Chart**

#### **Proposal Evaluation 10%**

Staffing of the WIA youth program is one of the most critical aspects of ensuring program quality. Please describe your proposed staffing plans.

1. While staffing/hiring decisions will be the responsibility of your organization, please identify the qualifications of the staff that will be involved in delivering the proposed WIA Youth services. Include brief position descriptions with position titles. Your staffing plan should also specify staffing levels and locations where these staff will be located. Include an organizational chart that illustrates the structure of the staff to be used in support of the proposed programs.
2. If the staff is to be hired at a later date, include the minimum qualifications required for selection of staff. Also, please include a detailed description of how qualified staff will be identified and selected.

3. Identify key management staff by name with a summary of their credentials and brief resume of qualifications.

#### **D. Partnerships and Coordination**

##### **Proposal Evaluation 10%**

1. Include a brief description of any partners that will be involved in the operation of the proposed WIA youth program. Describe the specific role that these partners will play in delivering the proposed workforce services to youth. Describe any past success in working with these partner organizations.
2. Include letters from all key partners your organizations will collaborate with, purchase services from, or establish referral relationships with. These letters must reference the specific commitments being made by these partner organizations, including services to be delivered to youth customers, financial or in-kind contributions if any, and any other commitment(s) being made.

#### **E. Financial Management and Budget**

##### **Proposal Evaluation 20%**

The bidder should complete a budget plan as provided in Attachment B. Please do not deviate from the budget plan provided. Consistency will allow the reviewers to compare the proposed budgets.

1. Bidders must maintain a financial management system that is auditable and in compliance with generally accepted accounting principles. Financial records must be available for audit and monitoring purposes. Bidders should provide a brief description of the accountability of the organization in this section and provide one copy of their most recent audit report with the bid package. Also, please provide one complete copy of the organization's current cost allocation plan. The audit and cost allocation plan will not be considered against the page limit for your proposal.
2. Has your organization had any questioned costs, disallowed costs or compliance monitoring findings in the last three years? If so, describe how the issues been resolved.
3. If WIA costs you incurred in the operation of the proposed youth program were subsequently disallowed as a result of an audit or monitoring, does your organization have the capability to repay these funds? From what source?
4. A one-page budget narrative should be attached that describes the allocation of funds amongst programs and the philosophy of the bidder with respect to minimizing overhead costs while maximizing client costs. The budget narrative should be used to clarify and annotate the budget.

Attachment A  
**PROPOSAL COVER SHEET**

Organization's Legal Name			
Contact Person:			
Address			
Telephone		Fax	
E-mail		Cell	
Federal ID #			
Number of years bidder has been in business under the corporate/business structure submitting this proposal?			
Total Amount of Funds Requested		PY 08	PY 09
	WIA Younger Youth Funds	\$	\$
	WIA Older Youth Funds	\$	\$
	Total Funds Requested	\$	\$
Grand Total (PY 08 and PY 09) \$			
Total Number of Clients to be Served	Planned # PY 08		
	Younger Youth		Cost Per Part.
	Older Youth		Cost Per Part.
	Total Youth		Cost Per Part.
	Planned # PY 09		
	Younger Youth		Cost Per Part.
	Older Youth		Cost Per Part.
	Total Youth		Cost Per Part.
	Signature: _____		
Print Name: _____			

Check all applicable boxes:

For Profit Corporation		Sole Proprietorship	
Not-for-profit Corporation		Faith-Based Organization	
Partnership		State Agency	
Educational Institution		Labor Organization	
Business Association		Community Based Organization	
Other Public Agency (Specify)		Other	

Attachment B

PY'08 & PY'09 Budget Plans

A budget plan must be completed for each category of youth you are proposing to serve. If proposing to serve both categories of youth (Younger Youth and Older Youth), a total of two budget plans will be required.

Instructions for completing a Budget Plan are located in the first tab of the Budget Plan file. Download Budget Plan from website [www.workonenortheast.org](http://www.workonenortheast.org).

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## WIA Youth Production Schedule Appendix 1

Enter Organization Name

### Program Year 2008

1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter	2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter	3 <sup>rd</sup> Quarter	4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter
7/1/08 – 9/30/08	10/1/08 – 12/31/08	1/1/09 – 3/31/09	4/1/09 – 6/30/09

### Planned Enrollments & Exits

	1st Quarter	2nd Quarter	3rd Quarter	4th Quarter	Total
Planned WIA Youth Enrollments					
Planned WIA Youth Exits					

### Performance Measures

Common Measures	Program Year 08 *	Organizational Goal
Employment, Education Placement	66%	
Attainment of Degree/Certificate	50%	
Literacy/Numeracy Gain	75%	

\* Performance Measures are subject to change based on state negotiations. Bidders should enter an estimated goal percentage for each of these measures.

Non-Collusion Affidavit

The respondent is hereby giving oath that it has not, in any way, directly or indirectly, entered into any arrangement or agreement with any other respondent or with any officer or employee of the Economic Growth Region 3 Regional Workforce board & Regional Operator whereby it has paid or will pay to such other respondent or officer or employee any sum of money or anything of real value whatever; and has not, directly or indirectly, entered into any arrangement or agreement with any other respondent or respondents which tends to or does lessen or destroy free competition in the letting of the agreement sought for by the attached response; that no inducement of any form or character other than that which appears on the face of the response will be suggested, offered, paid, or delivered to any person whomsoever to influence the acceptance of the said response or awarding of the agreement, nor has this respondent any agreement or understanding of any kind whatsoever, with any person whomsoever, to pay, deliver to, or share with any other person in any way or manner any of the proceeds of the agreement sought by this response.

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Signature of Authorized Representative

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Print or Type Name

Assurances and Certifications

The authorized representative agrees to comply with all applicable State and Federal laws and regulations governing the Workforce Investment Act, Workforce Investment Board, Regional Workforce Board & Regional Operator and any other applicable laws and regulations.

In addition, the authorized representative assures, certifies and understands that:

1. The proposing organization has not been debarred or suspended or otherwise excluded from or ineligible for participation in federal assistance programs.
2. The proposing organization possesses legal authority to offer the attached proposal.
3. A resolution, motion, or similar action has been duly adopted or passed as an official act of the organization's governing body authorizing the submission of this proposal.
4. A drug free workplace will be maintained in accordance with the State of Indiana requirements.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Authorized Representative

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print or Type Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date